

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Release at 7:00 am EDT

August 17, 1982

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

The US-China Joint Communiqué issued today embodies a mutually satisfactory means of dealing with the historical question of US arms sales to Taiwan. This document preserves principles on both sides, and will promote the further development of friendly relations between the governments and peoples of the United States and China. It will also contribute to the further reduction of tensions and to lasting peace in the Asia/Pacific region.

Building a strong and lasting relationship with China has been an important foreign policy goal of four consecutive American administrations. Such a relationship is vital to our long-term national security interests and contributes to stability in East Asia. It is in the national interest of the United States that this important strategic relationship be advanced. This communiqué will make that possible consistent with ~~an~~ ^{our} obligations to the people of Taiwan.

In working toward this successful outcome we have paid particular attention to the needs and interests of the people of Taiwan. My long-standing personal friendship and deep concern for their well-being is steadfast and unchanged. I am committed to maintaining the full range of contacts between the people of the United States and the people of Taiwan -- cultural, commercial and people-to-people contacts -- which are compatible with our unofficial relationship. Such contacts will continue to grow and prosper, and will be conducted with the dignity and honor befitting old friends.

Regarding future US arms sales to Taiwan, our policy, set forth clearly in the communiqué, is fully consistent with the Taiwan Relations Act. Arms sales will continue in accordance with the Act and with the full expectation that the approach of the Chinese government to the resolution of the Taiwan issue will continue to be peaceful. We attach great significance to the Chinese statement in the communiqué regarding China's "fundamental" policy; and it is clear from our statements that our future actions will be conducted with this peaceful policy fully in mind. The position of the United States Government has always been clear and consistent in this regard. The Taiwan question is a matter for the Chinese people, on both sides of the Taiwan Strait, to resolve. We will not interfere in this matter or prejudice the free choice of, or put pressure on, the people of Taiwan in this matter. At the same time, we have an abiding interest and concern that any resolution be peaceful. I shall never waver from this fundamental position.

I am proud, as an American, at the great progress that has been made by the people on Taiwan, over the past three decades, and of the American contribution to that process. I have full faith in the continuation of that process. My Administration, acting through appropriate channels, will continue strongly to foster that development and to contribute to a strong and healthy investment climate, thereby enhancing the well-being of the people of Taiwan.

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